



State of Connecticut
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SELECT COMMITTEE ON CHILDREN
Commission on Enhancing Agency Outcomes

**Testimony of Rep. Mary Mushinsky (85th District) In Support of R.B. 5489,
An Act Concerning Secondary School Reform**

Before the Education Committee
Public Hearing March 15, 2010

Thank you for raising this bill, which is nearly identical to Program Review and Investigation Committee's (PRI) Raised Bill 5165, An Act Concerning High School Graduation Requirements. I am co-chair of the PRI Committee with Sen. John Kissel. While our committee endorsed the PRI report, Alignment of Postsecondary Education and Employment (Dec. 2009 PRI Committee), the bill based on recommendation #8 of the report, R.B. 5165, failed to get out of PRI on March 11th. The single objection by some committee members was the application of new standards regardless of our success in winning federal grants. The Education Committee's bill R.B. 5489 avoids that objection by creating two different deadlines, an earlier one hinging on successful securing of federal grants and a later deadline if grants do not come through. I hope the Education Committee's slight variation will prove successful!

The Program Review and Investigations Committee report recommends higher standards for secondary schools throughout Connecticut because these standards are so clearly tied to success in the global marketplace. Our report noted the need to prepare Connecticut students to compete globally, and reported the increasing time, effort and expense devoted to remediation at the college level for underprepared Connecticut students. From our report:

These more stringent requirements are necessary to prepare students for postsecondary education and the workforce needs of a global economy. Therefore, the program review committee recommends that:

Connecticut should pass legislation reforming Connecticut high school graduation requirements as recommended by the State Department of Education in their proposed high school redesign.